

REMARKS

The office action mailed October 6, 2003 has been reviewed and carefully considered. By this amendment, Figure 5 is submitted for the Examiner's consideration.

Prior to addressing the Examiner's rejections on the art, a brief review of applicants' invention is appropriate. Briefly, the invention concerns a head drum for a helically scanning recorder which comprises a rotary upper drum and a stationary lower drum, which together form the head drum. A drum base is attached to the stationary lower drum, disposing the drum on a tilt angle with respect to a plane of a recorder's tape deck or chassis. A weld is provided to fix the lower drum to the drum base. In comparison to rotary drums of the prior art, the implementation of the weld simplifies the assembly of the lower drum to the drum base, thus reduces manufacturing cost.

Claims 1 - 5, 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Sawada et al. (JP 5-166249). Sawada discloses a rotary head drum device that includes a stationary drum which is fixed to a chassis. However, Sawada does not disclose how the stationary drum is fixed to the chassis.

The Examiner has asserted that the recitation of "said drum base and said lower drum are welded together" in original claim 1 is a method limitation and thus has not been accorded weight to the extent that it affects structure of the contemplated rotary drum. In order to clarify the claimed invention, claim 1 has been amended to recite a rotary drum for a tape recorder which includes a weld that fixes a drum base to a lower drum, the weld disposed at an abutting area of the drum base and the lower drum. Thus, the weld is now clearly recited as a structural limitation within the claim and therefore must be examined as such.

Importantly, Sawada wholly fails to teach or suggest a weld disposed at an abutting area of a drum base and a lower drum. Although Sawada does discuss a weld joint, the weld that is disclosed is not used to fix a drum base to a lower drum. Instead, the weld disclosed by Sawada is discussed as a problem to be solved. The weld is disclosed as attaching a grounded plate to a ground member. Sawada states that the weld creates a problem in that vibrations are transferred through the weld, resulting in undesirable noise and wearing of a contact terminal that is provided. Thus, Sawada actually teaches away from the use of a welded.

Claims 2 - 5, 7 and 8 are believed allowable at least based upon their dependence on an allowable base claim, namely claim 1. Additionally, claims 9-13 have been added to recite further aspects of Applicants' invention which the Applicants believe are novel and unobvious.

Withdrawal of this rejection and early allowance on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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